

Madame Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the rules package proposed by the new Republican majority in the House.

The very first vote in the 112th Congress reveals the extent of the Republicans' fiscal hypocrisy. The new House rules create a huge loophole that allows Republicans to pass billions in additional tax cuts without finding savings elsewhere in the federal budget. These rules are a major step backward in our effort to solve the federal budget crisis. No Member who votes for this fiscally reckless rules package is serious about deficit reduction.

The public backlash against the new Republican rules started days before today's vote. In a December 29, 2010 editorial titled "Deficit Hypocrisy," the New York Times said the new rules proposed by the incoming majority "will codify the Republican fantasy that tax cuts do not deepen the deficit."

The bi-partisan Committee for a Responsible Budget expressed "serious concerns" about the Republican rules package saying that "because many of these new rules would apply to only the spending side of the budget (replacing rules that applied to both the tax and spending side), this new rules package could actually weaken, rather than strengthen, our ability to deal with the debt."

By exempting the cost of tax cuts and the repeal of the health care reform law from budget restrictions, the Republican majority makes it clear that they embrace - not oppose - deficit spending. H. Res. 5 enables Republicans to return to their discredited economic policies of the past decade that exploded deficits with tax cuts, two wars and a huge new prescription drug entitlement program all financed with borrowed money.

What the Republicans do oppose and promise to cut are the investments that strengthen American communities and support the most vulnerable citizens in our nation. Under the new rules, the American middle class will be forced to live with less while the wealthy and special interests have it all. In the weeks ahead, Republicans will target America's middle class with unsustainable cuts to education, transportation, public safety, clean energy and advanced research and technology. The Washington Post editorial board said that the rules reflect "about as upside-down a set of priorities as can be imagined."

I reject the skewed priorities expressed in this rule package. I refuse to abandon America's families and communities when they most need the support of their government. And I will

continue fighting for the federal investments our communities need to compete in the 21st century.

I yield back the remainder of my time.